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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY East Germany

DATE DISTR. 28 March 1953

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Agricultural Conditions

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1. the shipment of grain from storage areas to consumer areas stayed behind schedule because of transportation difficulties. As a result mills in some areas where grain was needed were forced to close down completely. Since shipments of grain from imports continued to arrive, quantities of grain piled up in the large storage silos; old stocks had not yet been removed from the silos, and there was no space left for storing imports. In Moscow Russian ships were forced to lay over in the harbor longer than usual because there was no room in the Moscow silos for their grain. This resulted in a great loss of money. An investigation to determine who was responsible was initiated.
2. In December, procurement (Erfassung), as is usual in the winter, was concentrated on livestock. As a result of measures taken to round up livestock, more cattle were collected than could be transported to the abattoir for slaughtering. Large quantities of livestock accumulated at all shipping points. Deliveries to the slaughter houses were also irregular, which resulted in difficulties and more losses.
3. Potato stocks on hand in December will last until 31 March 1953, on the basis of a ration of 125 kilograms of potatoes per person. Stocks at the VEBs were not sufficient, however, to assure fulfillment of promised deliveries to plants of the potato processing industry (starch and dehydrating plants) and to meet the total demand for the second quarter of 1953. ¹ Since it was impossible to deliver potatoes because of weather conditions and L contracts were signed with producers who had not yet fulfilled their requirements, the results of this measure were not adequate, however, and every possible method was used to get the last of the potatoes from large farmers (gross-bauerliche Betriebe). Large farmers were not getting the price which the potatoes were worth; for eating potatoes they were paid the price of industrial potatoes, about one half the price of eating potatoes.
4. To meet the demands of consumers and to fulfill exports, the processing industry, especially the starch factories, of East Germany, had to process 500,000 metric tons of potatoes by the end of 1952. Only 180,000 metric tons of industrial potatoes were delivered, however, so that a deficit

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of 120,000 tons remained.

5. The vegetable situation became worse in December, and the civilian population continued to be completely without vegetables. Small quantities on hand at the VEAB had to be used for special consumers: the Ministry of the Interior (the national army), the Dienst fuer Deutschland, and the Russian Army of Occupation. Not enough vegetable stocks were on hand to satisfy the demands of these special consumers.
6. The entire procurement apparatus, the VEAB, is to be reorganized once more. On 15 December 1952 a large number of personnel was fired. Dismissals were based to a great extent on political affiliation, and in the course of the reorganization non-Communist specialists (Nur-Fachkrafte) were fired, especially former NSDAP members, former officers, people who had been prisoners in the West and, of late, even former Independents. As a result, the last remaining agricultural experts are leaving the VEAB.

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